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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 000621

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SUBJECT: LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS -- CAMPAIGN CONCLUDES WITH
PRESIDENT'S PARTY MAINTAINING LEAD IN POLLS

REF: JAKARTA 593 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph L. Novak, reasons 1.4(b+d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The campaign for the national legislative elections officially ended on April 5. A three day "cooling off" period begins today as Indonesia gears up for the elections on April 9. Polls indicate that President Yudhoyono's Partai Demokrat (PD) is still ahead. The President--just returned from London and the G20 Summit--wrapped up the last day of the campaign with rallies in central Java. Vice President and Golkar Chair Kalla concentrated on West Java. Meanwhile, former president Megawati held a huge rally for her party in Jakarta. A new party, Gerindra, is doing well in some polls and might surprise. END SUMMARY.

CAMPAIGNING ENDS

¶2. (U) Political party paraphernalia is disappearing from the streets in Indonesia in compliance with the government's ban on campaigning for the three days before the April 9 national legislative election. The official 20-day period allotted for mass rallies came to a close on April 5. Most of the bigger of the 38 parties held rallies in Jakarta or at sites across the country as they wrapped up their campaigns.

FINAL RALLIES, FINAL PROMISES

¶3. (SBU) Fresh from his return home from the G20 Summit in London, President Yudhoyono led PD's final rallies in Central Java. On April 4 he was in Yogyakarta. On April 5, he campaigned in other parts of central Java: he held a town hall meeting for 1,000 people in Magelang (where he graduated from the military academy) and a larger rally in Semarang. In his remarks, he stressed the need for national unity. He also praised Indonesians for their peaceful conduct during the campaign. He promised to continue what he characterized as a "pro-people" clean government focused on development. He urged everyone to comply with Election Commission (KPU) regulations to remove party paraphernalia and to keep the peace on election day.

¶4. (U) Vice President Jusuf Kalla--who doubles as chair of Golkar--made his final campaign appearances in West Sumatra and West Java. He promised a more efficient government and pro-people programs. He also declared that he would be "a good president" if elected. His slogan: "Golkar with 'JK,' faster, better."

¶5. (U) Former president Megawati Sukarnoputri ended the campaign of the Indonesian Party of Democratic Struggle (PDI-P) (her party) with two enormous rallies--one in Jakarta and one in the PDI-P stronghold of Bali. Pol FSN attended the April 4 Jakarta rally. Thousands of red-helmeted

motorcyclists wearing "Mega for President" t-shirts clogged the main thoroughfares of Jakarta, shouting: "give way, give way, the bull (PDI-P's symbol) will pass by". The Sukarno Stadium was festooned with bright red cloth, and as Megawati stepped onto the stage, the crowd rose, cheering, to its feet.

¶6. (U) Megawati emphasized "national unity through diversity" as she addressed the throngs with Muslim, Christian, and Hindu greetings. A Chinese dragon dance was also held during the rally (a nod to Chinese Indonesian supporters). She urged party members to avenge her bitter loss in the 2004 presidential election. (Note: She was incumbent in a head-to-head contest in the second round against current President Yudhoyono, who won in a landslide.) Megawati stressed how important it was to vote in this election, declaring: "If many legislative candidates get into the DPR (the national legislature), I will be elected president more easily."

¶7. (U) Megawati's campaign promises were, like many parties' platforms, aimed at poor people. She promised that PDI-P was serious about fighting for cheap daily necessities such as rice and cooking oil. She asked the crowd to be on the alert for vote rigging, and vowed to protect Indonesians from fraud and poverty if she was elected. She closed her speech with a love song: "Don't Want To Be Alone" whose lyrics were changed into PDI-P lyrics. A pro-PDI-P Muslim leader closed the rally with a prayer.

PD STILL AHEAD IN POLLS

JAKARTA 00000621 002 OF 002

¶8. (SBU) Ahead of the elections, several recent polls have confirmed that President Yudhoyono's PD party is still in the lead. A poll conducted in March and just released by the International Foundation for Elections (IFES) showed that a third of respondents favored PD. Two other polls, Soegeng Sarijadi Syndicate (SSS) and Indonesian Survey Institute (LSI) held March 28- April 1, support this finding. In all three polls, PDI-P finished second and Golkar third.

¶9. (C) The polls confirm that Indonesia's Islamic-oriented parties trail, with the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) doing the best of that group. The right wing, secular-oriented Gerindra party of former general Prabowo Subianto does well in the SSS poll, attaining 10.2 % of support. According to observers, if there is to be any surprise in this election, it could be Gerindra's performance and whether this well-funded new party can break from the pack and help spark Prabowo's bid for the presidency.

¶10. (U) The latest polls follow:

Party	IFES Poll	SSS	LSI
PD	30	20.2	26.6
PDI-P	18.8	13.5	14.6
Golkar	15.2	12.2	13.7
Gerindra	6.5	10.2	3.1
PKS	5	9.7	4.9

HUME